

TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE



FISCAL NOTE

HB 10 - SB 10

March 7, 2015

SUMMARY OF BILL: Requires students to pass the civics portion of United States Citizenship and Immigration Services' naturalization test before they graduate high school. Requires the Department of Education (DOE) to compose and disseminate this test to each local education agency (LEA). Each student shall be given the opportunity to take the test until they pass. Students must receive a grade of at least 60 percent to pass the test. Prohibits students from receiving a regular high school diploma until a passing grade is achieved.

ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:

NOT SIGNIFICANT

Assumptions:

- The civics portion of the U.S. Citizenship and Naturalization test is an oral exam. The test proctor asks up to 10 questions taken from a selection of 100 potential questions. A passing grade is at least 60 percent or six out of 10 correct answers.
- All of the questions and answers for the civics portion of the naturalization test, as well as study materials, are available online through the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website.
- Information about the test and study materials may be provided to students electronically. Any increase in state and local expenditures to provide such materials is estimated to be not significant.
- Based on a study done by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the passing rate on the civics portion of the naturalization test is currently 97.5 percent.
- Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-1202 requires each high school student to take at least one year of instruction in American history and government.
- The civics test will be given orally by existing teachers or staff during the year of instruction in American history and government.
- No increase in local expenditures for additional personnel.
- This bill does not prohibit students who do not pass the test upon the first examination from having the test re-administered.
- It is estimated that given the availability of test materials, the current statutory high school course requirements, and the current passage rate for non-U.S. citizens, that each student will pass the civics test and receive a high school diploma.

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- No shift in state and local Basic Education Program (BEP) funding as a result of students failing to pass the civics test and failing to receive a high school diploma.

CERTIFICATION:

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey L. Spalding". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeffrey" and last name "Spalding" clearly distinguishable.

Jeffrey L. Spalding, Executive Director

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